

Appl. No.  
Amdt. dated December 8, 2003  
Preliminary Amendment

PATENT

**REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**

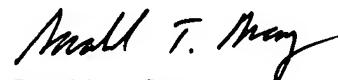
The specification is hereby amended. No new matter is introduced by this amendment.

**CONCLUSION**

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 925-472-5000.

Respectfully submitted,



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